

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Story behind cover photo of
'Soldier of the Cuban Revolution'
—PAGES 8–9

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 75/NO. 2 JANUARY 17, 2011

Iowa: Locked-out workers snub Roquette's new 'offer'



Militant/Maggie Trowe

Workers locked-out by corn processor Roquette in Keokuk, Iowa, picket, January 4.

BY DAVID ROSENFELD
AND MAGGIE TROWE

KEOKUK, Iowa—Locked out for three months by Roquette America, workers at the corn processing plant here continue to picket the company around the clock. The members of Local 48G of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union (BCTGM) also recently declined to vote on a

revised offer from the company after Roquette issued a statement to the local newspaper in an effort to divide the union.

According to the *Gate City* daily newspaper, Roquette spokesperson Aliza Golan stated that 240 copies of the offer were available to the membership. "The company has given the contract to union leaders, but we

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Public workers target of U.S. austerity drive

N.Y. governor vows pay freeze, deep cuts

BY SETH GALINSKY

Democratic and Republican politicians across the United States are implementing steep attacks on the wages, benefits, and pensions of government workers and more cuts in social programs. A broad campaign is under way to scapegoat unionized

workers for growing budget deficits in the midst of the capitalist economic crisis.

Andrew Cuomo, the newly elected Democratic governor in New York, has been blunt about his intentions. "There are no more baby steps, my

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U.S. gov't pushes ROTC return after 'don't ask, don't tell' repeal

BY CINDY JAQUITH

Washington has taken another step in its bipartisan effort to bring the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) back onto campuses where massive protests against the Vietnam War in the 1960s and '70s forced it out.

On December 22, the same day Congress approved nearly \$160 billion more for the imperialist wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, President Barack Obama signed into law a bill repealing the "don't ask, don't tell" policy that bars gays from serving openly in

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Supporters of 'Militant' launch drive to win long-term readers



Militant/Baskaran Appu

Annalucia Vermunt, then Communist League candidate for mayor of Auckland, New Zealand, sells *Militant* subscriptions and book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* in working-class suburb of Mangere, September 2010, during international fall subscription and *Workers Power* sales campaign. Supporters of *Militant* are now following up with the more than 2,000 fall subscribers to win long-term readers through renewal drive.

BY PAUL MAILHOT

Over the next four weeks many of those who bought introductory subscriptions to the *Militant* during the fall circulation campaign will receive renewal notices. Now is the time for supporters of the *Militant* to visit these readers to find out what they think about the paper and discuss how they can use it to advance their fights and their political understanding of today's world.

To encourage this effort the *Militant* is launching a four-week campaign beginning with this issue to win as many long-term readers as possible from

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What Kind of Socialism For the 21st Century?

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Mary-Alice Waters, editor, *New International* magazine

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‘Security’ law in Canada targets immigrant worker

BY MICHEL PRAIRIE

MONTREAL—A federal judge declared December 9 that Algerian-born Mohamed Harkat “is a danger to Canada and that the security certificate against him should be maintained.” The Canadian government has announced its intention to deport Harkat back to Algeria.

Harkat was given refugee status in 1997 on grounds that he faced political persecution if he returned home. Harkat was arrested in 2002 after being labeled an al-Qaeda sleeper agent by the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service. Before his arrest he worked in Ottawa as a pizza delivery man and a gas station attendant. Since then Harkat and his wife Sophie Harkat-Lamarche have been waging a broad campaign both to clear his name, lift the security certificate against him, and abolish the entire security certificate process.

The certificates are used to detain and deport refugees and immigrants the Canadian government deems a threat to “national security.” The system is based on secret evidence that the accused can neither see nor challenge in court.

In 2007, under pressure from Harkat’s campaign and others victimized by such certificates, the federal Supreme Court ruled the security certificate process “invalid” under Canada’s Charter of Rights and Freedoms. In response, Ottawa made a number of cosmetic changes to the process a year later. The ruling against Harkat is the first time a court has validated the “new” security certificate system.

Harkat’s defense campaign, which has won wide support among civil libertarians, unionists, and others, led to his release from house arrest in 2006. When a “new” security certificate was issued against him in 2008 under the revised law, he appealed the decision. In the meantime courts have since invalidated and lifted security certificates of two other victims of this anti-working-class judicial procedure, Adil Charkaoui in Montreal and Hassan Almrei in Toronto.

In a message issued December 22, the Justice for Mohamad Harkat Committee stated, “We are still standing, and stronger and more determined to fight this injustice than ever.”

In a widely reported Ottawa press conference December 10, Harkat announced that he will appeal the constitutionality of the new security certificate law to the Federal Court of Appeal and, if necessary, to the Supreme Court of Canada.

Information about the Justice for Mohamed Harkat Committee is available at www.justiceforharkat.com.

John Steele contributed to this article.

Sudanese Canadian fights UN sanctions list



Militant/Beverly Bernardo

MONTREAL—Some 100 people marched here December 11 to support the fight by Abousfian Abdelrazik (above, holding microphone) to be removed from the UN Security Council’s list of entities and individuals with alleged associations with al-Qaeda or the Taliban. Adopted by the Security Council in 1999, resolution 1267 calls on states to impose a travel ban and freeze assets of those on the list. Protesters demanded that the Canadian government lift its sanctions against Abdelrazik and withdraw from the 1267 regime. In 2009 Abdelrazik succeeded in winning his fight to return to Canada from his native Sudan after gaining widespread support across the country.

—BEVERLY BERNARDO

N.Y.C.: Homeless denied aid in housing ‘experiment’

BY SARA LOBMAN

NEW YORK—New York City’s Department of Homeless Services is conducting a callous experiment on workers in danger of eviction who have applied for housing assistance.

Half the 400 households that re-

quested help from the city’s Homebase program between June and August are being denied assistance for two years so that researchers can track them to see if they end up homeless. The other half will receive job training, counseling services, and emergency money to help them stay in their homes.

Nearly 37,000 people in New York are currently living in shelters. A September 2010 report found that more than 90 percent of those receiving aid from Homebase did not end up in shelters.

City officials are making it more difficult for workers to receive aid through other programs, as well. Earlier this year it increased the amount that households enrolled in the Advantage Program had to contribute toward rent from \$50 a month to up to 40 percent of their monthly income. And to stay with the program for a second year, at least one

family member must find a job and work 35 hours each week, up from 20 hours.

New York is not the only place subjecting working people to such tests. The federal department of Housing and Urban Development has started a study in 10 cities and counties to track up to 3,000 households that end up in homeless shelters. Families will be randomly assigned to programs that put them in homes, give them housing subsidies, or, by denying any aid force them to stay in shelters.

And in Washington, D.C., where rents have soared to the highest level in at least 20 years, the city council is planning to make homeless applicants prove they are D.C. residents before they can receive shelter. “We cannot be the hotel for Virginia and Maryland residents,” council member Thomas Wells said.

THE MILITANT

Solidarity with workers’ struggles

As the bosses and their government increase layoffs and drive against workers’ wages, health care, pensions, and safety on the job, the ‘Militant’ is on the scene providing a working-class response to these attacks. Don’t miss an issue.



Building workers locked out in Brooklyn, New York, rally December 2.

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Miss. governor shows true colors in statement, decision

BY CINDY JAQUITH

Mississippi governor Haley Barbour—who met a storm of protest recently when he publicly praised the segregationist White Citizens’ Councils—announced December 29 he was granting parole to two Black women who are sisters and serving double-life terms.

In an interview published in the December 21 *Weekly Standard*, Barbour, who is eyeing a U.S. presidential run on the 2012 Republican ticket, looked back on the good old days of Jim Crow segregation. Asked about life in his hometown of Yazoo City, Mississippi, during the 1960s when racist violence was common throughout the South, he said, “I just don’t remember it as being that bad.”

“You heard of the Citizens Councils?” Barbour asked. “Up north they think it was like the KKK. Where I come from it was an organization of town leaders. In Yazoo City they passed a resolution that said anybody who started a chapter of the Klan would get their ass run out of town.”

Barbour rapidly issued a “clarification” of his remarks, saying “nobody should construe that to mean I think the town leadership were saints. . . . Their vehicle, called the ‘Citizens Council,’ is totally indefensible, as is segregation.”

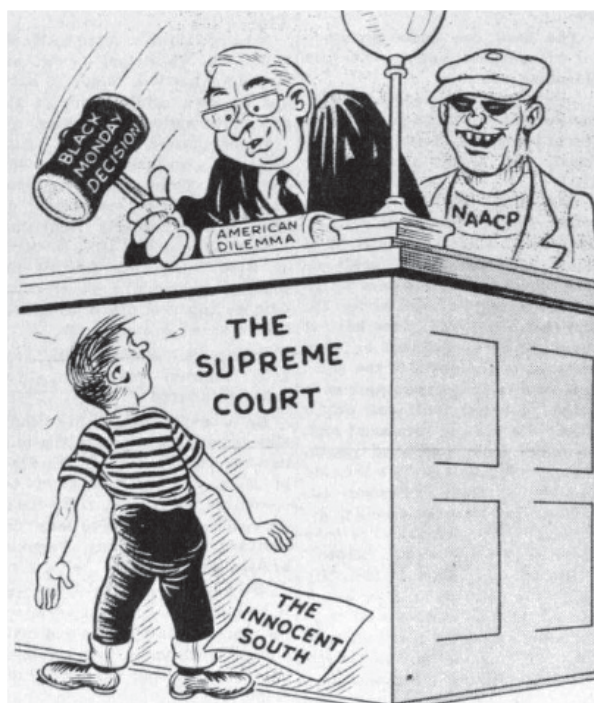
The White Citizens’ Council, as the organization was commonly known,

was founded in 1954 in reaction to the Supreme Court decision that year outlawing segregation in public education. The council sought to project a more palatable image than the anti-working-class night riders of the Klan, but its motto of “racial integrity” and “states rights” left no doubt where it stood.

In 1955 the White Citizens’ Council in Yazoo City ran a full-page ad in the daily paper listing the names and addresses of 53 African Americans who had petitioned for enforcement of the Supreme Court desegregation decision. The threat was clear—withdraw your name from this petition or risk losing your job, your home, or worse. All but two signers took their names off.

Yazoo at the time had a whites-only hospital and separate—and unequal—schools for Blacks and whites. The segregated schools lasted all the way until 1969, when insistent supporters of Black rights finally forced the county to desegregate. The “town leaders” of the White Citizens’ Council immediately set up a Manchester Academy for white children. Barbour enrolled his two sons there.

The circumstances surrounding the parole of Jamie and Gladys Scott makes it clear Barbour has had no change of heart. They were convicted in 1994 on charges they led two men into a trap where they were robbed at gunpoint of \$11. The Scotts maintain their innocence. Mississippi law allows a sentence



Left, racist cartoon from 1955 issue of White Citizens’ Council newspaper denouncing Supreme Court decision against school segregation. Mississippi governor Haley Barbour praised council in December 21 interview. One week later, in effort to burnish image, Barbour suspended sentences of sisters Jamie and Gladys Scott, top and bottom respectively, on condition Gladys donate her kidney to Jamie. The two were railroaded to jail for life in 1994 for \$11 robbery.



of up to life in prison for armed robbery, legislation enacted for use against Blacks and other workers. Three other defendants in the case who pled guilty served two-year terms and were freed.

Barbour said he was suspending indefinitely the sentences of the two sisters but put a price tag on their release. For Gladys Scott it’s conditional on donating a kidney to her sister Jamie, who is severely ill and has been denied adequate dialysis treatment in prison. Barbour said, “Jamie Scott’s medical condition creates a substantial cost to the state of Mississippi.” The state Department of Corrections will not have to finance the

kidney transplant operation if the sisters are released.

Many newspapers have pointed to the callousness of Barbour’s pardon statement and the fact he never said a word about the injustices the Scotts have faced. Michael Shapiro, chief of organ transplantation at Hackensack University Medical Center in New Jersey, said Barbour’s decision to coerce someone to give up a kidney as the price for parole was “unethical and possibly illegal.”

NAACP president Benjamin Jealous, on the other hand, praised the way the governor handled the case, calling it a “shining example.” The NAACP played a prominent role in efforts to get Jamie and Gladys Scott out of jail.

In an interview with CNN shortly after meeting with Barbour December 30, Jealous said the two of them “didn’t talk about” the issue of whether the imprisonment of the Scotts was just. But Barbour understood, said Jealous, “that these women simply don’t need to be in prison one day longer.”

Mississippi “is a state with a lot of divisions,” Jealous continued. “And you’ve got to communicate across all of those. And I think that [Barbour’s] statement does that in a way that’s very craftily done.”

Class origins of White Citizens’ Councils

The following excerpt is from Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. In a 2001 talk titled “Jim Crow, the Confederate Battle Flag, and the Fight for Land,” Barnes describes the roots of white supremacist organizations like the White Citizens’ Councils in the defeat of the southern slaveholders by the northern industrial capitalists in the U.S. Civil War and the common goal of both to prevent any successful challenge to class exploitation by working people, Black or white. Copyright © 2009 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BY JACK BARNES

Communist workers must take seriously the *history* of current struggles by farmers who are Black. We need to recognize their place in an ongoing continuity reaching back to the U.S. Civil War and Radical Reconstruction—the Second American Revolution—and the decades of reaction that followed in the countryside, towns, and cities across the South.

Many of these farmers are fighting to continue cultivating land that their kin have farmed for generations. For a Black family in the U.S. South to have held onto land for that long means that previous generations fought and survived the lynch-mob terror of organized white-supremacist night riders that continued, and often accelerated, in the wake of the defeat of post-Civil War Radical Reconstruction. This came closer to fascist violence on a broad scale, and over an extended period, than anything else ever seen in this country.

In the decade following the defeat of the slavocracy in 1865, the rising northern industrial bourgeoisie—now reknitting links with power landholding, commercial, and emerging manufacturing interests across the South—settled once and for all that it had no intention of meeting the aspirations of freed slaves for the radical land reform captured by the popular demand for “forty acres and a mule.” Doing so, first of all, would have deprived these exploiters of a cheap supply of jobless laborers. What’s more, the bourgeoisie correctly feared that an alliance of free farmers, Black and white, together with the growing manufacturing and machinofacturing working class in the cities, could pose a strong challenge to intensifying exploitation in town and country, North and South.

In 1877 the U.S. rulers withdrew federal troops from the states of the old Confederacy. These troops had been armed force of last resort standing between the freed Black toilers, on the one hand, and gangs of well-armed, reactionary vigilantes, on the other. Throughout the closing decades of the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth, successive generations of organizations such as the Knight of the White Camelia, the White League, the Klu Klux Klan, the White Citizens’ Councils, and many others—named, unnamed, or renamed—carried out an unrelenting reign of terror against the Black population in the South.

This systematic violence helped the capitalists drive toilers who were Black into virtual peonage as sharecroppers and tenant farmers and made it possible for Jim Crow segregation

to be imposed and codified into state law in one southern state after another. These gangs were also organized to break the spirit of any class-conscious worker or farmer anywhere in the South who wasn’t Black—“nigger lovers”—and to prevent them linking up arms with toilers who were Black in common struggles for land, for public education, for cheap credit and railway rates, for labor union rights, or anything else in the interests of the oppressed and exploited.

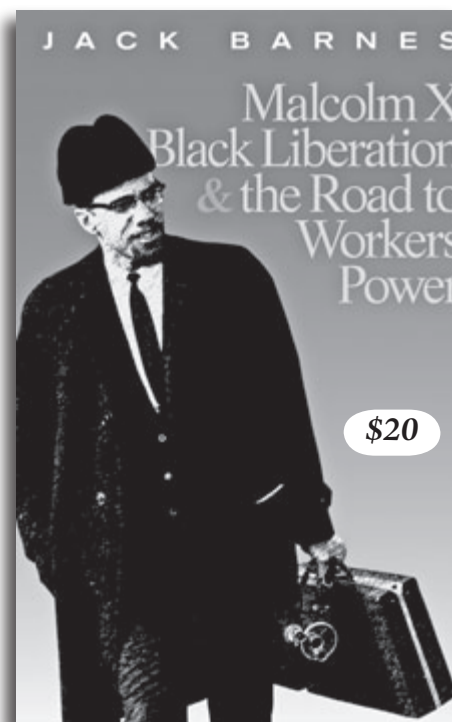
Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power

by Jack Barnes

“This is a book about the dictatorship of capital and the road to the dictatorship of the proletariat. A book about the last century and a half of class struggle in the United States—from the Civil War and Radical Reconstruction to today—and the unimpeachable evidence it offers that workers who are Black will comprise a disproportionately weighty part of the ranks and leadership of the mass social movement that will make a proletarian revolution. . . .”

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Workers laid off after New Zealand mine blast

BY MIKE TUCKER

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—More than 100 workers at Pike River Coal were laid off December 13 after the company was put in receivership. The underground coal mine has not operated since November 19, when the first of a series of explosions erupted, killing 29 men. Their bodies have not been recovered.

Workers employed by the company will receive wages and holiday pay owed them, plus redundancy (unemployment) compensation. Those employed for more than a year should receive severance pay. However, miners working as contractors are designated “unsecured creditors” and might receive nothing. The receivers announced December 23 that the outstanding wages of 13 contractors killed in the mine would be paid up to the November 19 date of the explosion.

Receivers were called in by Pike River’s biggest creditor, New Zealand Oil and Gas, which acted to protect its assets. As a secured creditor, it will be paid ahead of others. Coking coal in the mine is estimated to be worth \$4 billion.

Former workers at the mine and families of the deceased have formed a committee to represent them. “The families and workers to date have sat back and listened to everything being done, but now want to have a voice,” said elected spokesman Bernie Monk, whose son Michael was killed in the disaster.

Monk noted that contract miners were among those who “worked 18–20 hours a day to try and get our loved ones out and then to be told that they’re in receivership and they’ve got no money—I’m just gutted for them.” Workers and businesses that supplied equipment and services to the recov-

ery effort are also among those unlikely to be reimbursed.

The Pike River mine is in the Paparoa mountain range, 30 miles north-east of Greymouth on the west coast of New Zealand’s South Island. The region has been the center of coal mining in this country for more than a century.

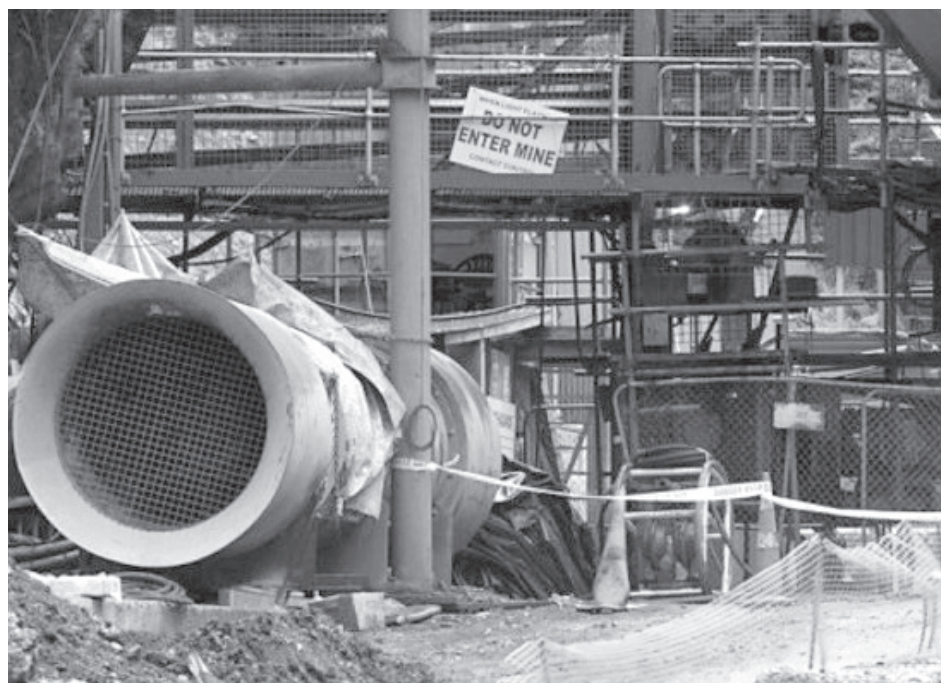
Authorities say it will be at least several months before it may be safe to reenter the mine because of continuing high gas levels and extreme heat after a coal fire raged through the mine.

Several inquiries into the mine disaster are under way, including a royal commission of inquiry announced by the government.

Some 11,000 people turned out in Greymouth December 2 for an official memorial service for the 29 dead miners. Speakers included New Zealand governor-general Anand Satyanand, National Party prime minister John Key, and Pike River Coal chief executive Peter Whittall. Other government and opposition politicians attended.

Speaking several days later, Les Neilson, a working miner and unionist at the nearby Spring Creek mine, told journalists that “you see some of them sitting on the stage at the remembrance service and there are some guilty-looking people sitting there as far as I’m concerned.”

Neilson was referring to the repeal



Entrance to Pike River Coal mine following November 19 explosion that killed 29 miners. The mine has not reopened since.

of coal mining legislation in the early 1990s that dismantled the mining inspectorate. “We’ve tried for years to get proper legislation brought back in,” he said, noting that the two main political parties, National and Labour, are each “as guilty as the other” in resisting union efforts to increase safety.

The 1992 Health and Safety in Employment Act took away the right of workers and unions to enforce safety on the job and to refuse dangerous work. The law change put mine safety in the hands of the police and Occupational Safety and Health, a government department.

Protesting that change at the time, mine inspector Billy Brazil noted that previous mining legislation had

been “literally written and paid for in blood.”

A former Pike River miner, Brent Forrester, told the December 5 television news program *Sunday* of miners’ concerns leading up to the explosion. “There have been gas issues, there have been ventilation issues,” he said. “This was totally preventable, in my opinion.”

Today there are just three mines inspectors for the whole country and one for oil exploration. Responding to the erosion of mine safety, the Engineering, Printing and Manufacturing Union, which organizes coal miners, has been campaigning for the return of mine inspectors who are on site at all mines and check safety before the start of each shift.

Carol DeBerry: Decades-long builder of SWP

BY BETSEY STONE

SAN FRANCISCO—Carol Dobbs DeBerry, a longtime member and supporter of the Socialist Workers Party, died December 20 in Hayward, California. She was 83 years old.

During four decades of political activity—from the end of World War II to the mid-1980s—DeBerry was a stalwart builder of the Socialist Workers Party.

She was drawn to working-class politics at an early age, the oldest of three daughters of Farrell Dobbs, a leader of the Teamsters strikes in 1934 that made Minneapolis a union town and helped pave the way for the rise of the industrial unions. He was national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party from 1953 to 1972.

“We got a feeling of the solidarity, the power, the potential strength of the union movement,” DeBerry’s sister Mary-Lou Montauk recalls, describing how they both participated in mass rallies during the Teamster struggle, while still in grade school.

Carol was 14 years old when Farrell Dobbs and 17 other leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and Teamsters union were sentenced to prison under the thought-control Smith Act for their opposition to the imperialist aims of the U.S. government in World War II. Farrell Dobbs spent 12 months in federal prison in 1944–45.

At the end of World War II, Carol Dobbs joined the Socialist Workers Party’s youth group in New York. A strike wave was sweeping the country and the party was growing. An effective salesperson of the *Militant*, she participated in campaigns that greatly expanded the readership of the *Militant* during that



Militant/Robert Kopec

Carol DeBerry in 2009. She joined Socialist Workers Party coming out of World War II and over four decades actively participated in struggles for desegregation, workers’ rights, against war in Vietnam, and in defense of Cuban Revolution.

period, going door-to-door in Harlem and other working-class communities.

After moving to Chicago in 1950, she joined the Socialist Workers Party and participated in antiracist struggles that were developing in the city’s Black community.

Segregated housing was a big issue. Migration from the South almost doubled the size of the Black community between 1940 and 1950. Yet Blacks were confined almost entirely to the South Side ghetto, leading to massive overcrowding.

When Black families moved into a previously all-white public housing project in 1953, Carol Dobbs and other party members joined the fight to de-

fend them against violent attacks by racists seeking to drive them out. That same year, she participated in a strike at Leaf Brands, the candy factory where she worked.

While in Chicago, Carol met her lifelong companion, Clifton DeBerry, a unionist and antiracist fighter who became a leader of the Socialist Workers Party. He was the SWP candidate for U.S. president in 1964, the first Black to be nominated and run for that office.

Carol and Clifton DeBerry moved to New York with their daughter Simone in 1960, a time when the triumph of the Cuban Revolution and the intensification of antiracist struggles were bringing new openings for revolutionary activity.

Carol DeBerry helped build activities in defense of the Cuban Revolution organized by the Fair Play for Cuba Committee. She joined the pickets in front of Woolworth department stores in solidarity with student sit-ins to desegregate lunch counters in the South. And from the early 1960s on, she took part in protests against the Vietnam War.

During the 1970s, after moving to the San Francisco Bay Area, DeBerry participated in the fight for women’s right to abortion, for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, and other women’s liberation struggles. As a member of the Coalition of Labor Union Women, she fought to increase the involvement of trade unionists in the defense of women’s rights and to strengthen the struggles of women on the job.

DeBerry resigned from the Socialist Workers Party in 1984. Although no longer active, she continued to be a supporter of the SWP for the rest of her life.

Teamster Rebellion

The 1934 strikes that built the industrial union movement in Minneapolis and helped pave the way for the CIO, recounted by a central leader.

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ON THE PICKET LINE

Gov't workers in Quebec town launch two-week strike

SHERBROOKE, Quebec—Some 400 municipal workers here who are responsible for road maintenance, garbage collection, and other services began a two-week strike December 26 after overwhelmingly rejecting the city's contract offer.

A key issue is the workers' demand that the existing gap in insurance benefits between full-time and seasonal temporary workers be closed. Some 48 of these so-called seasonal employees work year-round. "Our goal is to overcome divisions and strengthen our union," said Michel Murray of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE).

This is the first major strike organized by CUPE Local 2729 in more than three decades. Under provincial legislation some of the strikers are required to continue providing "essential services." Strikers reported that wages earned by these workers are being shared with the other strikers.

"Why a strike now? Because we have never been so united and well organized," said Rénaud Dubé, president of the local. The strikers have received support from many other workers in Quebec. "Solidarity is key," Dubé said.

—Michel Dugré and John Steele

Sky Chef workers protest in Minnesota food plant

MINNEAPOLIS—Forty workers confronted the general manager inside the cafeteria at the Sky Chefs food catering plant at the Minneapolis-St. Paul airport December 16. The workers, members of UNITE HERE Local 17, wanted to present demands against

speedup and for sanitary conditions that would protect themselves and airplane passengers who eat the food they produce.

UNITE HERE represents 6,600 Sky Chef workers in the United States and Canada. The company supplies food to more than 300 airlines around the world.

At first the workers were told the manager was too busy to talk with them. "We want Bill, we want Bill," the workers said loudly, using the name of the manager. He then rapidly appeared and agreed to set a meeting time.

Most of the workers were drivers and driver helpers, angered by numerous disciplinary write-ups of their coworkers. Many other factors have angered Sky Chefs workers. In 2005 Sky Chefs cut wages and benefits by 30 percent. This month health-care premiums are rising to more than \$500 per month for family plans. Average wages are \$10 per hour. Negotiations between the union and company have dragged on since the previous contract ended a year ago.

Just before Christmas the company distributed \$10 gift cards. Eight day-shift workers in the sanitation department refused to take the cards. Some workers did likewise in the transportation and beverage departments. Such a small gift is an insult, was the sentiment of many.

—Tom Fiske, member of
UNITE HERE Local 17 at Sky Chef

Iowa: Locked-out workers approve Titan Tire contract

DES MOINES, Iowa—United Steelworkers Local 164 members here approved a contract with Titan Tire De-



St. Paul Union Advocate

Sky Chef workers rally in Twin Cities, Minnesota, October 22. Event marked one-year anniversary of contract fight by UNITE HERE, representing 6,600 Sky Chef workers nationwide.

cember 23. Company chairman and CEO Morry Taylor announced December 17 he had made his "final, last and best offer." He then broke off negotiations and locked out workers at plants in Freeport, Illinois; Bryan, Ohio; and Des Moines.

The new contract is for two years with a wage freeze. There is a significant increase in workers' medical and dental payments.

Rob Shelton, a worker with 20 years at the plant, told the *Des Moines Register*, "I can't say I like this contract very much, and it's pretty tough to have to vote just a couple of days before Christmas."

In 1998 Titan workers here began a strike that lasted 40 months. Many of the workers hired to break that strike stayed at Titan and subsequently joined the union.

—Helen Meyers

Illinois: Titan workers reject contract, but return to work

FREEPORT, Illinois—A majority of workers at Titan Tire's plant here and in Bryan, Ohio, rejected the company's "final, last and best offer" during a December 23 contract vote. Workers at the Titan plant in Des Moines approved the pact.

Workers had set up spirited round-the-clock picket lines during the lockout, which the company began the week before Christmas. The plant here employs more than 500 workers making tires for farm machinery, mining, and construction equipment.

"They want us to accept a contract that includes forced 12-hour shifts," said Rickey Stidman, a worker in the mold and bladder department with 33 years at the plant. "And on top of that we could be forced to work up to 72 hours a week."

"Their contract would also mean we have to pay \$80 a week for medical benefits, or \$320 a month," Jim Lawson, a millwright with 18 years in the plant, said.

After the vote Titan Tire ended the lockout. The company asserted that negotiations had reached an impasse and that it now had the right to impose its contract on the union. United Steelworkers officials announced there would be no strike action at this time and that union members would return to work at all three plants.

—Betsy Farley

Drive to win long-term readers of 'Militant'

Continued from front page

among those workers, farmers, and young people whose subscriptions are expiring. The *Militant* is their paper. Local areas should adopt goals for the campaign. These will be printed in next week's issue of the paper. Each week will feature responses to the campaign. All renewals—whether for three months, six months, or a year—will be counted through February 8.

Militant supporters should draw the attention of new readers to the feature coverage about the Cuban Revolution. This includes the introduction to the new book *Soldier of the Cuban Revolution* by Brig. Gen. Luis Alfonso Zayas, which just appeared in the *Militant* in English and Spanish. Regular coverage of the lessons of the Cuban Revolution for workers around the world is a hallmark of the *Militant* and one of the few sources fighters can rely on to cut through the lies of U.S. imperialism.

During the fall campaign many factory workers were introduced to the *Militant* by socialist workers they met on the job. Whether it is covering a picket line to fight for a union contract, explaining the imperialist aims of Washington's wars, or drawing on the rich history of the communist movement, the *Militant* is written to advance the struggles of working people. Gaining more long-term readers to the socialist press in the factories strengthens working-class consciousness and resistance. As workers use the *Militant* and send in their comments and suggestions it becomes a better paper too.

The renewal campaign is an opportunity for socialist workers to follow up on discussions with those who bought *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by Jack Barnes during the fall circulation campaign. What sections of the book did they find most interesting or helpful? Are there other books distributed by Pathfinder and advertised in the *Militant* they would like to pick up? Do they want to know more

about the Socialist Workers Party?

Getting started right away on the renewal campaign is also a way to promote the January 15 public meeting "What Kind Of Socialism for the 21st Century: The Long, Hard Battles Ahead" advertised on the front page of this issue. For anyone who is interested in the fighting perspective presented in the *Militant* this is a meeting they will not want to miss.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



January 17, 1986

Working farmers, reeling from their worst crisis in 50 years, have just been hit with several severe body blows by the government.

A new farm bill adopted by Congress and signed by President Reagan on December 23 will substantially lower the price the government pays farmers for their commodities over the next five years. On the same day, the president put his signature to a bill that will help the Farm Credit System tighten its squeeze on debt-burdened farmers and drive thousands more of them off the land.

And as if these two holiday packages were not enough, on New Year's Eve the Farmers Home Administration announced that it was notifying thousands of farmers who owe the government lending agency nearly \$6 billion to pay up or face foreclosure.



January 16, 1961

Officials of the University of Georgia bowed Jan. 12 to a mob organized by the Ku Klux Klan and suspended Charlayne Hunter, 18, and Hamilton Holmes, 19. The two young students were the first Negroes to attend classes in the 175-year history of the school. They were suspended just one day after being enrolled under a federal court order.

The federal court order compelling school authorities to admit the two students was issued Jan. 6, a year and a half after they first filed their applications. Frantic legal maneuvering was used to bar their entry, but this failed.

Attempts were made to incite white students against Miss Hunter and Mr. Holmes but these appeared to meet with little response.



January 18, 1936

SAN FRANCISCO—The year 1936 is ushered in with the west coast waterfront daily becoming more tense. A storm is brewing that will, when it breaks, make the strike of 1934 seem like a gentle breeze.

Fifty-nine steam schooners are tied up, as the men refuse to work more than six hours per day. The bosses have retaliated with a lockout. These ships ply coastwise between the northern lumber regions and San Francisco. The Seamen's Union of San Francisco, differently than the so-called "left" as well as conservative labor leaders, is supporting the seamen of these steam schooners.

The *Pennsylvania* was tied up for several days as the east coast seamen refused to man her, unless they received the same rate of pay as is drawn by the sailors signing out of west coast ports.

Recalling U.S. detention of Japanese Americans

Leader of draft resisters, Frank Emi, dies at 94

BY PATTI HIYAMA

SAN FRANCISCO—The last surviving leader of the Heart Mountain Fair Play Committee, an organization of interned Japanese Americans who resisted being drafted into the U.S. Army during World War II, died on December 1 in West Covina, California. Frank Seishi Emi, who died at the age of 94, was among the Japanese Americans who stood up for their rights and dignity during the war and afterward.

His life also stands as a reminder of the U.S. government’s systematic racist policies while it was claiming to be the defender of “democracy” during the second inter-imperialist slaughter.

Some 120,000 men, women, and children were evacuated from the West Coast three months after Tokyo attacked Pearl Harbor in December 1941. They were incarcerated behind barbed wire in 10 concentration camps in remote inland areas. Two-thirds of the evacuees held illegally without trial were citizens of the United States. Their sole crime was their Japanese ancestry.

The Fair Play Committee (FPC) of Heart Mountain directed the only organized draft resistance among Japanese Americans in the camps. More than 300 men from all 10 camps resisted and were jailed for draft evasion.

After Executive Order 9066 ordering internment was issued, Japanese Americans were given 72-hours notice to dispose of their property and to pack only what they could carry in two bags per person. The evacuees lost their farms, fishing boats, small businesses, and homes. Emi, a Los Angeles grocer, had to sell the family business for six cents on the dollar. He and his family were first imprisoned at the Pomona Assembly Center while the concentration camps were being built, and then shipped to the Heart Mountain War Relocation Authority camp in Wyoming.

The U.S. prison camps were established in isolated, inhospitable areas

such as deserts and swamps. Guarded by armed military police and surrounded by barbed wire, the inmates maintained the upkeep of the camps under the supervision of white personnel.

The common Japanese phrase *shikata ga nai* (it cannot be helped) expressed the resignation of many. As Emi later stated, “The military escorted us to the camp with their guns and bayonets, so there really wasn’t much thought about standing up for your rights at that time.”

But later some organized to resist. Protest rallies, demonstrations, work stoppages, and even general strikes of evacuees took place at all the camps around the issues of living conditions, especially food and housing, the availability of work, wages, and working conditions.

Emi quietly drove a truck and made tofu each day until early 1943 when the government began to distribute questionnaires to all adult internees. Question no. 27 asked: “Are you willing to serve in the armed forces of the United States on combat duty, wherever ordered?” Question no. 28 asked: “Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States of America and faithfully defend the United States from any or all attack by foreign or domestic forces, and forswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese emperor, or any other foreign government, power, or organization?”

Gov’t questions spark controversy

This compulsory questionnaire sparked widespread confusion and sharp controversy in all the camps, sometimes leading to physical confrontations. If you answered “yes” to question 27, it appeared that men, women, and elderly all were volunteering to serve in the army. Many asked how they could be loyal enough to fight for the U.S. while imprisoned in the camps as a “military necessity.”

None of the *Nisei* (American-born



Japanese Americans arrive at Heart Mountain camp in remote area of northwest Wyoming, September 1943. Camp existed August 1942–November 1945; held some 10,000 prisoners.

Japanese) had ever sworn allegiance to Japan, although this was one of the racist rationales cited for putting them behind barbed wire. The *Issei* (Japanese-born immigrants) were forbidden by law from becoming U.S. citizens but were still citizens of Japan. They were being asked to renounce their Japanese citizenship without American citizenship to replace it.

Few in the United States spoke out against the evacuation and internment of the Japanese Americans. Most liberals supported the war drive, as well as the majority of groups calling themselves socialist or communist. There were only a few notable exceptions who opposed the incarceration of Japanese Americans—the International Longshoremen’s and Warehousemen’s Union, the American Friends Service Committee, and the Socialist Workers Party, along with a scattering of civil libertarians and intellectuals.

The Communist Party supported the internment and deregistered its Japanese American members. “The Party suspended all Nisei from membership saying that ‘the Party was the best place for any Japanese fifth columnist to hide and we don’t want to take any chances,’” noted CP member Karl Yoneda in a 1972 party resolution. This position was an integral part of the CP’s policy of subordinating all struggles to the U.S. war effort in compliance with Moscow’s wartime alliance with U.S. imperialism.

In part because of the overwhelming support for internment, as well as the institutionalized racism Japanese had faced from the moment they arrived, the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), the largest political organization of the Nisei, had a policy of cooperation with authorities to “turn the tragedy of evacuation into a display of loyalty.” They urged people to answer “yes-yes” and Nisei men to volunteer in the armed forces. They backed the formation of segregated Japanese American units on the grounds that Japanese Americans “were inconspicuous scattered throughout the Army.” Because of this “individual records would not prove much,” they argued, and it was therefore necessary “to have a demonstration in blood.”

Frank Emi took a different course: “No more *shikata ga nai*.” He posted his answers on the mess hall doors that

said, “Under the present conditions and circumstances, I am unable to answer these questions.”

He was not alone. Of the 77,957 detainees who were eligible to register, 5,300 answered no. An additional 4,639 either failed to register, didn’t answer both questions, or qualified their loyalty in some way. More than 20 percent of Nisei men answered negatively.

The U.S. government was shocked by the response. The War Relocation Authority had initially projected as many as 2,000 volunteers from Heart Mountain alone for a segregated army unit commanded by white officers, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. But only 1,181 men from all 10 camps volunteered.

This was in sharp contrast to Japanese Americans in Hawaii, who had never been deported and interned. The original quota had called for 1,500 from Hawaii, but nearly 10,000 volunteered.

After devastating casualties suffered in Italy, the War Department began drafting the interned Nisei in January 1944.

Some 33,000 Japanese American citizens served in the U.S. Army in segregated units under white officers during World War II. The most famous formation, the 442nd, was consistently used as the first wave of assault troops. They suffered some 9,500 casualties, more than three times the unit’s size, and were the most decorated unit in the Army during the war.

Detainees resist draft

While individuals at every camp decided on their own to resist the draft, at Heart Mountain resistance was organized by the Fair Play Committee. Emi was among the group’s seven leaders. For more than a month, the FPC held a series of meetings nearly every night in different mess halls in every block of

Continued on page 7

New International MAGAZINE OF MARXIST POLITICS AND THEORY

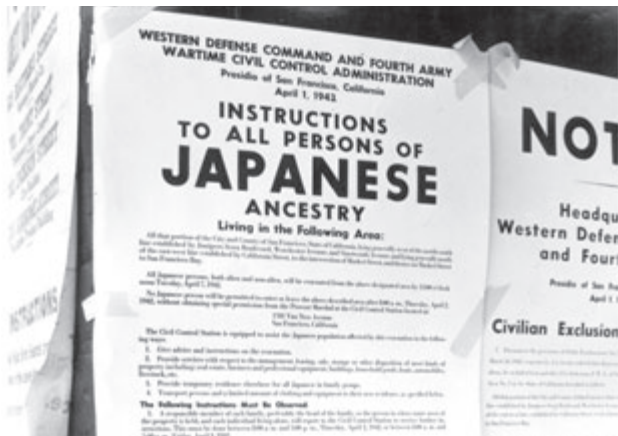
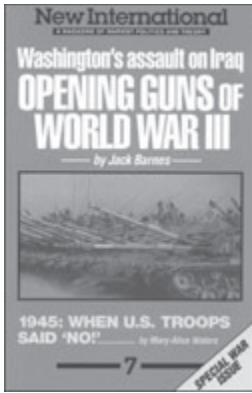
In issue 7 (\$14)

Opening Guns of World War III explains how the murderous assault on Iraq in 1990–91 heralded increasingly sharp conflicts among imperialist powers, growing instability of international capitalism, and more wars. **1945: When U.S. Troops Said ‘No!’** tells the hidden story of the GI revolt at the end of World War II, when U.S. troops refused to allow themselves to be used to crush spreading anticolonial struggles. Other articles discuss the roots of the militarization drive Washington set in motion at the end of the 1970s.

In issue 14 (\$14)

Revolution, Internationalism, and Socialism: The Last Year of Malcolm X discusses how, in the imperialist epoch, revolutionary leadership of the highest political capacity, courage, and integrity, as exemplified by the last year of Malcolm’s life, converges with communism. **Setting the Record Straight on Fascism and World War II: Building a World Federation of Democratic Youth that Fights Imperialism and War** dissects the lie that World War II was a war for “democracy” and explains the worldwide class conflicts involved. Two other articles take up the roots of the 2008 world financial crisis and why, under capitalism, labor is organized in a way that undermines both nature and the worker—the source of all wealth and culture.

Available from Pathfinderpress.com



Exclusion Order posted at First and Front Streets in San Francisco removing Japanese Americans from first affected section of city. Order bars Japanese from leaving or entering area after April 2, 1942, and says all Japanese from area will be removed by noon on April 7.

Moroccan gov't harasses Sahrawi festival delegates

BY LAURA GARZA

Among the thousands who participated in the 17th World Festival of Youth and Students held in South Africa December 13–21 are some who faced government victimization either on their way to or returning from the festival. Malainin Lakhal, secretary general of the Sahrawi Journalists and Writers Union, sent information to the *Militant* about two of the 27 delegates from Western Sahara who were arrested by Moroccan authorities upon their return December 26.

As one of the delegates from West Sahara, Lakhal presented a forum at the festival on the fight for independence of the Sahrawi people against the occupation of their land by Morocco. “Ms. Mariam Bourhimi and Ms. Kalthoum Lebsir were arrested upon their arrival at Casablanca airport and immediately taken into custody, while the other members of the delegation were thoroughly searched,” wrote Lakhal. “The Moroccan police confiscated all the documents, books, bags, T-shirts, and anything they had that could be related

to the festival.” Following this harassment most of the delegation was allowed to fly to El-Aaiún, the occupied capital of Western Sahara, later that day.

“The two detainees, Mariam and Kalthoum, were transferred the next day in police cars from Casablanca to the occupied capital of Western Sahara, where they were brought before the Moroccan colonial court. The Moroccan prosecutor decided to release Kalthoum without charges, while Mariam was temporarily released and will be called again to court next March for more investigation.”

The arrests and harassment take place as protests mount by Sahrawis in the occupied territories against repression by the Moroccan regime. Tens of thousands of Sahrawis live in exile in camps in the desert on the Algerian side of the border with Morocco. More than 100 Sahrawi delegates attended the South African festival, most of them from the refugee camps and 29 from the occupied territories.

In face of a growing independence struggle by the Sahrawi people, led by the national liberation group the Polis-



Militant/Gordon Brown

Demonstration in support of liberation for Western Sahara in Pretoria, South Africa, December 15, during 17th World Festival of Youth and Students.

rio Front, Spain ceded control of Western Sahara in 1975 to the semicolonial regimes of Mauritania and Morocco. The Polisario Front launched a war against the occupying powers, defeating the Mauritanian forces within a few years. But when the war ended in

1991 the Moroccan government controlled 80 percent of Western Sahara. The independence movement has been participating since then in UN-sponsored negotiations for a referendum on Sahrawi independence.

The recent Moroccan army attack on the Gdim Izik camp outside the city of El-Aaiún and a wave of arrests that followed were among the issues presented by the Sahrawi delegates to festival participants. The final declaration of the festival read in part, “We strongly condemn the continued military occupation of Western Sahara by the Kingdom of Morocco and request the respect of the Sahrawi peoples right to self-determination and independence. . . .

“We denounce and condemn all forms of human rights violations, including persecutions, arbitrary detentions, disappearances and irregular trials, etc., committed by the Moroccan authorities against the Sahrawi civilians and demand the release of all political detainees and the disbanding of the wall dividing the territory.”

Eleven youth who tried to attend the festival but were arrested either at El Aaiún or Casablanca airports en route to the event remain in custody.

U.S. gov't detention of Japanese Americans

Continued from page 6

the camp. Typically there were speeches by a couple of FPC leaders about the unconstitutionality of the internment and the injustice of applying the draft to internees, followed by rebuttals and questions from the audience. Meetings often lasted hours.

Hundreds attended the meetings and 200 paid the \$2 membership dues, which paid for a mimeograph machine to print a bulletin. The FPC restricted membership to those who stated loyalty to the United States and readiness to serve in the military once their civil rights were restored. They sought to differentiate themselves from pro-Japan nationalists, who were also resisting the draft. By the end of March 1944, 54 of the 315 detainees ordered to report for induction had failed to do so.

In their March 4 statement the FPC declared:

“Until we are restored all our rights, all discriminatory features of the Selective Service abolished, and measures retaken to remedy the past injustices thru Judicial pronouncement or Congressional act, we feel that the present program of drafting us from this concentration camp is unjust, unconstitutional, and against all principles of civilized usage, therefore, WE, MEMBERS OF THE FAIR PLAY COMMITTEE *HEREBY REFUSE TO GO TO THE PHYSICAL EXAMINATION OR TO THE INDUCTION IF OR WHEN WE ARE CALLED IN ORDER TO CONTEST THE ISSUE.*”

When the Fair Play Committee began to agitate for a general strike at Heart Mountain, the government arrested two of the leaders and shipped them off to Tule Lake. In a series of court cases, the backbone of the resistance was broken. The Heart Mountain draft resisters, whose numbers had grown to 63, were tried in June 1944 in the largest mass trial for draft resistance in U.S. history. They were found guilty by the judge and sentenced to three years in jail; their appeal was denied by the Supreme Court.

Most of the 300 draft resisters from

the other nine camps were also arrested, convicted, and served jail time for draft evasion. They lost their appeals but all were later pardoned by President Harry Truman in 1947.

In October 1944 the seven leaders of the Fair Play Committee were found guilty of conspiracy to counsel draft evasion. Five, including Emi, were sentenced to four years in prison and two others received three years.

They were sent to the federal penitentiary at Leavenworth in Kansas. To protect themselves in prison, Emi, holder of a judo black belt, led the Nisei in a martial arts exhibition on “Sports Day.” One of the smallest Nisei went up against a much larger white inmate, whom he easily flipped. After that none of them were bothered by the general inmate population. In December 1945 a federal appeals court overturned their convictions. They were released from prison, having served 18 months.

After the war Emi worked for the postal service and later for the state unemployment office. For decades he was silent about his controversial past, facing disapproval from other Japanese Americans, particularly among those who fought in the U.S. military. During the war, the Japanese American Citizens League demanded that the government charge the draft evaders with sedition, calling them “cowards” and “hooligans.” They were left out of most history books.

In the 1980s Emi joined the redress movement, the term used by Japanese Americans to describe their fight for official recognition of the injustice they suffered. The movement originated in the early 1970s under the impact of the Black rights and anti-Vietnam War movements. Emi began to speak publicly about his wartime civil disobedience, and other draft resisters became emboldened to speak up as well.

Congress at last passed the Civil Rights Act of 1988, which officially apologized to Japanese Americans and provided reparations of \$20,000 to each of the 56,000 survivors of the

concentration camps.

After years of acrimonious debate, the JACL finally passed a resolution in 2000 publicly apologizing to the resisters “for not acknowledging the resisters’ stand of protesting the denial of constitutional rights, and for the pain and bitterness this caused.” Emi was one of the major speakers at the “recognition and reconciliation” meeting organized by the JACL to deliver this public apology.

Emi’s candor, courage, and calm reasoning earned him much respect. Frank Abe, who produced a documentary on the FPC called “Conscience and the Constitution,” wrote:

“He was an ordinary young man, but a man of conviction who rose to the occasion when faced with the injustice of the camps.”

Zimbabwean immigrants seek papers in S. Africa



Militant/Maceo Dixon

PRETORIA, South Africa—Zimbabwean immigrants in South Africa line up December 21 to make an end of the year deadline to apply for a permit to legally work. The South African government has threatened to deport all those who don’t apply. But most have not and hundreds of thousands lack the necessary papers to do so. “We work here to provide food for our kids and family,” said Washington Chiore, a 31-year-old bricklayer from Zimbabwe. While South Africa has an unemployment rate of 25 percent, many Zimbabweans emigrate here because of the much more desperate situation in their own country. Lawyers for Human Rights estimate there are at least 1.5 million Zimbabweans living in South Africa, out of a population in Zimbabwe of about 12 million.

—WILLIE COTTON

Capturing a moment in revolution

Cover of ‘Soldier of the Cuban Revolution: From the Cane Fields of

Below is a piece that appears at the end of Pathfinder Press’s just released book *Soldier of the Cuban Revolution: From the Cane Fields of Oriente to General of the Revolutionary Armed Forces* by Cuban brigadier general (ret.) Luis Alfonso Zayas, who is today one of the national leaders of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution. The book is available in both English and Spanish. Copyright © 2011 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

The photograph on the cover of this book captures a high point in the history of the men and women who made the Cuban Revolution. Taken by Raúl Corrales, one of the revolution’s great photographers, the picture shows a militia unit of workers and farmers riding to the headquarters of the United Fruit Company near the town of Mayarí in eastern Cuba on May 14, 1960, to inform its management that the company’s massive holdings had been expropriated, that these lands and buildings had become the property of Cuba.

In April 1960, a year after the first of the revolution’s two deepgoing agrarian reform laws began to be carried out, a group of sugar cane farmers and agricultural laborers working one of the vast plantations of the United Fruit Company and nearby farms wrote a letter to the National Institute of Agrarian Reform (INRA). They asked the revolutionary government to do something about United Fruit’s refusal to share the water it piped to its domains with workers and farmers who lived on or near their property.

A few weeks later, an INRA delegation visited United Fruit’s offices at the company’s Preston sugar mill in what is today Holguín province. They presented the farmers’ and workers’ request for access to water. According to an account by INRA’s executive director at the time, Antonio Núñez Jiménez, the company’s answer “was an insolent ‘No.’”

The next day, in response, Prime



Raúl Corrales

Militia unit of workers and farmers riding to United Fruit Company headquarters near town of Mayarí in eastern Cuba, May 14, 1960, to inform management that company was being expropriated. Used as cover photo for book *Soldier of the Cuban Revolution*, by Alfonso Zayas.

Minister Fidel Castro signed an order expropriating the more than 270,000 acres, nearly 425 square miles of Cuban land, held by United Fruit—a name that had become so hated throughout Latin America that the company later decided to reinvent itself as Chiquita Brands International. The wealthy US capitalist families who own the corporation had extensive landholdings throughout Central America and the Caribbean, including in Nicaragua, Guatemala, Costa Rica, and Panama, whose rulers had so often been subordinated to imperialist interests through a combination of bribery and, when necessary, naked force.

The expropriation decree included the Preston sugar mill and all US-owned property on the plantation.

* A peso was roughly equivalent to one US dollar at the time.

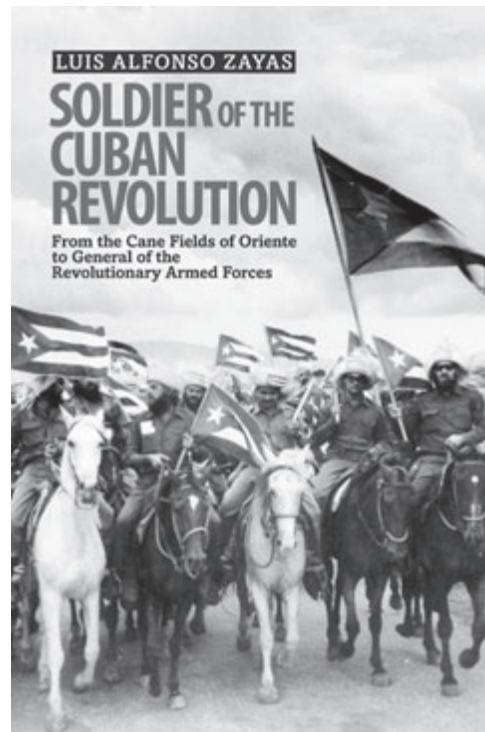
United Fruit was to receive compensation of 6,150,207 Cuban pesos* in twenty-year Agrarian Reform bonds paying an annual interest of 4.5 percent. The same terms were given other big landowners expropriated under the 1959 agrarian reform law. That law set a limit of roughly 1,000 acres on individual landholdings, transferred property in excess of that limit to the new government, and granted sharecroppers, tenant farmers, and squatters title to the land they tilled. Interest on the agrarian reform bonds was to be paid from the sugar “quota,” the amount of Cuban sugar guaranteed for sale each year in the United States. Compensation was based on the assessed value of the holdings of United Fruit and other big landowners, which in turn was based on the value the companies themselves had declared for tax purposes a year and a half earlier, in October 1958.

In face of outraged cries from Washington and other imperialist governments and their mouthpieces—“Confiscation!” screamed the headline in *Time* magazine’s June 1, 1959, issue—Fidel Castro explained the necessity of the revolutionary government’s land reform in his address to the United Nations General Assembly in September 1960.

“In our country [the land reform] was indispensable,” the Cuban leader told the delegates, speaking over the UN’s marble rostrum to revolutionary-minded working people and youth around the world. “More than 200,000 peasant families lived in the countryside without land with which to plant essential foodstuffs. Without agrarian reform our country could not have taken the first step toward development,” he said—toward solving “the great unemployment problem on the land” and “the frightful poverty

Soldier of the Cuban Revolution

From the Cane Fields of Oriente to General of the Revolutionary Armed Forces



Luis Alfonso Zayas, a general in the Cuban Revolutionary Armed Forces, recounts his experiences over five decades in the Cuban Revolution. From a teenage combatant in the clandestine struggle and 1956–58 war that brought down a U.S.-backed dictatorship, to serving three times as a leader of the Cuban volunteer forces that helped Angola defeat repeated invasions by the army of white-supremacist South Africa, Zayas tells how he and millions of ordinary men and women in Cuba changed the course of history and, in the process, transformed themselves as well.

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Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui, Moisés Sío Wong

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Cuba and the Coming American Revolution Jack Barnes

Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War, 1956–58 Ernesto Che Guevara

In each of these books, “the author tells the story of how as a rebel-minded young person they found themselves drawn to, and educated by, the revolutionary struggles of the Cuban workers and farmers who refused to accept the conditions of life imposed on them by the propertied families who owned the plantations, mills, and factories. And how they never turned back.”

—from introduction by Mary-Alice Waters to *Soldier of the Cuban Revolution*

Available from PathfinderPress.com

ary history: Story behind a photo

f Oriente to General of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba'

that existed in the rural areas of our country.”

As to the compensation paid to the expropriated capitalist families, Castro said, “Notes from the U.S. State Department began to rain down on Cuba. They never asked us about our problems [or] their responsibility in creating the problems. They never asked us how many died of starvation in our country, how many were suffering from tuberculosis, how many were unemployed.” Instead, he said, the State Department “demanded three things: ‘prompt, adequate, and effective compensation.’ Do you understand that language?” Castro asked. “That means, ‘Pay this instant, in dollars, and whatever we ask.’ ”

The arrogant response of the owners of United Fruit to the Cuban government’s compensation offer was no different. While the giant corporation had “acquired” its vast landholdings for well under a penny an acre (some \$817 all told!)—at the turn of the twentieth century, when the island was under direct US military occupation—its owners demanded that the Cuban government pay them more than \$56 million for the expropriated land.

A few months later, in retaliation against the expropriation of US-owned properties and other measures taken by the revolutionary government in the interests of Cuba’s working people, the US rulers ended all sugar imports from Cuba. With that unilateral act, Washington rendered null and void redemption of the bonds.

The US government’s abolition of the quota was soon followed by a full-fledged economic embargo of Cuba that remains in effect to this day.

The mounted militia squad on the cover is reminiscent of the nineteenth-century *mambi* army units, often composed primarily of combatants who had been slaves or bonded Chinese laborers. After thirty years of revolutionary struggle, that army won Cuba’s independence from Spain in 1898. The pictured *mambises* of May 14, 1960, included many of the farmers who had written to INRA only a few weeks before.



Peasants establishing farm cooperative in Cárdenas, Cuba, early 1960s. Without agrarian reform, Fidel Castro said, Cuba could not have taken first steps toward solving “the great unemployment problem on the land” and “frightful poverty” in rural areas.

The ceremony where the expropriation was officially proclaimed was held on the golf course that had been reserved for United Fruit Company bosses and their friends. Those assembled learned that the new name of the mill was to be “Guatemala”—in honor of the people of that country, whose government had been overthrown in 1954 in a US-organized coup to reverse a land reform affecting holdings of United Fruit and other US corporations there.

Among the first measures implemented by INRA in the area was to give the toilers the authorization and

means to install pipes to provide water from the former United Fruit’s aqueduct to neighboring farmers.

The new administration of the Guatemala mill, with the armed support of the revolutionary government, also put an end to segregated living quarters on the United Fruit plantation, where, Nuñez noted, there were “neighborhoods with borders, so that blacks and whites, Americans and Cubans, could not live together or intermingle.” There was even a neighborhood called Brooklyn “where the poorest and blackest live,” while “near the bay, in brand-new buildings with luxurious gardens, are the homes of the Americans and their Cuban lackeys. . . .”

Prior to 1944, Nuñez recalled to those celebrating United Fruit’s expropriation, the company had refused to allow a public school on the grounds of the sugar mill, or the construction of additional roads to connect the plantation with the Central Highway. “They wanted to keep this region isolated, closed off to all progress, to have us isolated here as if it were—and it was, in fact—a separate republic.”

■

In late 2010, as the final editing of *Soldier of the Cuban Revolution* by Alfonso Zayas was under way, an exhibit entitled “Cuba in Revolution” opened at New York City’s International Center of Photography. It was widely acclaimed in newspapers and magazines across the country. Of the more than 180 evocative photos on display at the museum—from prerevolutionary Cuba of the early 1950s, through 1968—the photograph by Raúl Corrales that serves as the cover of this book was selected by the curators as the image used on press releases and brochures for the show. It was reproduced as part of reviews of the exhibit in newspapers as varied as the *New York Times*, the *Militant*, and the *Boston Globe*, and magazines such as *Art Daily* and *Art Info*.

As the exhibit brought home to those of us fortunate enough to see it, the photographic record of the Cuban Revolution draws its power from the joy and creativity, the youth, humor, and enthusiasm of Cuba’s working people. That love of life and determination to struggle was captured on film as they set about laying the foundations of a new social order and defending their newly conquered freedom with discipline and arms, with their lives.

From that same wellspring, world-famous Cuban photojournalists of the epoch, including Alberto Korda, Osvaldo Salas, Liborio Noval, and Corrales himself, developed their craft and created a priceless legacy. That some of their photos have enriched the covers and internal pages of books published by Pathfinder Press over the last two decades, and in that way can be shared more widely with revolutionary-minded working people around the world, is a source of great satisfaction.

December 2010

Public workers target of U.S. austerity drive

Continued from front page

friends,” he said in his inaugural address, vowing to drastically slash government spending.

Cuomo says he will make big cuts in New York’s Medicaid program and freeze wages of state workers. Some 900 state workers were laid off on New Year’s Eve.

According to the *New York Times*, Cuomo “has kept a substantial campaign war chest on reserve” to buy advertising to counter unions if they resist his plan. He also initiated a “Committee to Save New York,” made up of real-estate moguls and businessmen to push for further layoffs and fight any proposals to increase property taxes.

The governor kept the inaugural ceremony low key, and announced he was taking a personal 5 percent pay cut in his \$179,000 yearly salary to send the message that rich and poor will share the sacrifice and belt-tightening to reduce the state’s \$9 billion deficit.

Union contracts for most of the state’s 190,000 employees expire March 31. But union officials so far have held few protests or strongly criticized the moves. Instead some say they are asking to be included in negotiating the exact terms. “It sounds like he’s [Cuomo] trying to set a tone that we need to all do our part,” Stephen Madarasz, a spokesperson for the Civil Service Employees Association, told the press. “We don’t have any problem with doing

our part.”

Cuomo is not the only governor pushing the cost of the economic crisis onto the backs of working people under the banner of deficit reduction. The newly elected Michigan governor, Republican Richard Snyder, claims wages for government workers are “out of line” and that state workers will need to make a “larger sacrifice.”

California governor Edmund Gerald Brown, a Democrat, promised that his new budget for the state, already buffeted by layoffs and cuts in social services and education, “will be painful.”

Municipal and state governments across the United States cut 212,000 jobs last year. At the same time, many states have skipped or cut payments to pension funds. New Jersey governor Christopher Christie recently withheld \$3.1 billion owed to the state’s pension fund, bringing the total owed to \$53.9 billion. What this widespread practice can mean for working people was shown in Prichard, Alabama. Last year the government there stopped paying pension checks to retired city workers, saying it had run out of funds altogether.

House Republicans, led by Congressman John Boehner, are calling for cutting \$100 billion from the federal budget, excluding military and police agencies.

While governments at all levels are preparing more attacks on the living standard of working people, some busi-

nesses are faring better, at least for now. Bloomberg news service reported that “Manufacturing in the U.S. expanded in December at the fastest pace in seven months, reinforcing signs the expansion is gaining momentum.”

But an uptick does not necessarily mean more jobs. The bosses prefer to boost production through speedup, not expanded hiring.

‘Everything on the table’

In a New Year’s Day editorial, the *Times* cautioned that “cutting too deep, too fast will stall the recovery.”

But at the same time the paper argues that more cuts are needed and “everything will have to be on the table, including entitlements and defense.”

By everything on the table they mean wages, jobs, pensions, health care, and social security. One item not on the table are the interest payments to banks and bondholders. New York State debt service spending is expected to reach \$6.4 billion for the 2010–11 fiscal year alone.

Investor’s Business Daily in a December 27 editorial encourages more scapegoating, charging that local governments are being bankrupted “by high wages and gold-plated benefits for public sector workers” and “lavish compensation.” The paper’s solution, besides making workers pay for the capitalists’ crisis? “Outlaw collective bargaining for public-sector workers.”

Women's liberation and African freedom struggle

Below is an excerpt from Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle by Thomas Sankara, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for January. Sankara was the central leader of the popular democratic revolution in the West African country of Burkina Faso (formerly Upper Volta) from 1983 to 1987. This excerpt is from a talk he gave to several thousand women commemorating International Women's Day on March 8, 1987, in Ouagadougou, the country's capital. Copyright © 1990 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BY THOMAS SANKARA

The question of women's equality must be in the minds of all decision-makers, at all times, and in all the different phases of conceiving and executing plans for development. Conceiving a development project without the participation of women is like using only

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

four fingers when you have ten. It's an invitation to failure.

In the ministries responsible for education, we should take special care to assure that women's access to education is a reality, for this reality constitutes a qualitative step toward emancipation. It is an obvious fact that wherever women have had access to education, their



Women celebrate second anniversary of revolution, Aug. 4, 1985, in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. "There is no true social revolution without the liberation of women," said Sankara.

march to equality has been accelerated. Emerging from the darkness of ignorance allows women to take up and use the tools of knowledge in order to place themselves at the disposal of society. All ridiculous and backward concepts that hold that only education for males is important and profitable, and that educating women is an extravagance, must disappear in Burkina Faso.

Parents should accord the same attention to the progress of their daughters at school as they do to their sons, their pride and joy. Girls have proven they are the equals of boys at school, if not simply better. But above all they have the right to education in order to learn and know—to be free. In future literacy campaigns, the rate of participation by women must be raised to correspond with their numerical weight in the population. It would be too great an injustice to maintain such an important part of the population—half of it—in ignorance.

In the ministries responsible for labor and justice, texts should constantly be adapted to the transformation our society has been going through since August 4, 1983, so that equality between men and women is a tangible reality. The new labor code, now being drawn up and debated, should express how profoundly our people aspire to social justice. It should mark an important stage in the work of destroying the neocolonial state apparatus—a class apparatus fashioned

and shaped by reactionary regimes to perpetuate the system that oppressed the popular masses, especially women.

How can we continue to accept that a woman doing the same job as a man should earn less? Can we accept the levirate* and dowries, which reduce our sisters and mothers to common commodities to be bartered for? There are so many things that medieval laws continue to impose on our people, on women. It is only just that, finally, justice be done. . . .

As we go forward, our society should break from all those feudal conceptions that lead to ostracizing the unmarried woman, without realizing that this is merely another form of appropriation, which decrees each woman to be the property of a man. This is why young mothers are looked down upon as if they were the only ones responsible for their situation, whereas there is always a guilty man involved. This is how childless women are oppressed due to antiquated beliefs, when there is a scientific explanation for their infertility, which science can overcome.

In addition, society has imposed on women norms of beauty that violate the integrity of their bodies, such as female circumcision, scarring, the filing of

* The levirate is a marriage in which the widow weds a brother of the deceased, with varying degrees of compulsion.

teeth, and the piercing of lips and noses. Practicing these norms of beauty is of dubious value. In the case of female circumcision, it can even endanger a woman's ability to have children and her love life. Other types of bodily mutilation, though less dangerous, such as the piercing of ears and tattoos, are no less an expression of women's conditioning, imposed by society if a woman wants to find a husband. Comrade militants, you look after yourselves in order to win a husband. You pierce your ears and do violence to your body in order to be acceptable to men. You hurt yourselves so that men can hurt you even more! . . .

Comrades, no revolution—starting with our own—will triumph as long as women are not free. Our struggle, our revolution will be incomplete as long as we understand liberation to mean essentially that of men. After the liberation of the proletariat, there remains the liberation of women.

Comrades, every woman is the mother of a man. I would not presume, as a man and as a son, to give advice to a woman or to indicate which road she should take. This would be like giving advice to one's own mother. But we know, too, that out of indulgence and affection, a mother listens to her son, despite his whims, his dreams, and his vanity. And this is what consoles me and makes it possible for me to address you here. This is why, comrades, we need you in order to achieve the genuine liberation of us all. I know you will always find the strength and the time to help us save our society.

Comrades, there is no true social revolution without the liberation of women. May my eyes never see and my feet never take me to a society where half the people are held in silence. I hear the roar of women's silence. I sense the rumble of their storm and feel the fury of their revolt. I await and hope for the fertile eruption of the revolution through which they will transmit the strength and the rigorous justice issued from their oppressed wombs.

Comrades, forward to conquer the future.

The future is revolutionary.
The future belongs to those who struggle.
Homeland or death, we will win!

January

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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Defend public employee unions

Democratic and Republican politicians and the employers they represent are blaming public employees and their unions for the budget crisis of state and city governments. Everyone else is suffering, they say, why should “greedy” city and state workers continue to get good pensions and pay increases?

The labor movement needs to answer this boss campaign, which is aimed not just at turning middle-class layers but also union members against public employee unions.

Some of the more brazen big-business mouth-pieces, like the *Wall Street Journal*, actually claim to take the side of privately employed workers against public employees. “In the private sector, union workers increasingly pay for more of their own health care, and they have defined contribution pensions plans such as 401(k)s,” the *Journal* noted. “In this they have something fundamental in common even with the fat cats on Wall Street: Both need their companies to succeed.”

The false idea that what’s good for the company is good for the worker has been used to derail the labor movement since its inception. Based on this notion trade union bureaucrats bargained for health care and pensions for their members alone, rather than fight for federally funded, guaranteed

national health care and pensions for all. In recent years union members have watched these benefits evaporate as the companies that promised them simply declared their inability to pay.

Karl Marx, a founder of the modern communist movement, wrote in 1866 that the trade union movement arose not out of something “in common” with the capitalists but *in opposition to* the capitalist-induced competition at the heart of the wages system. Unions arose spontaneously as the only means to check the employers by banding together rather than letting the boss pit worker against worker.

But the trade unions “kept too much aloof from general social and political movements,” Marx pointed out, focusing on their narrow interests in each industry rather than taking on the wages system itself. He insisted the future lies in the unions becoming “organizing centers of the working class in the broad interest of its *complete emancipation*” and “acting as the champions and representatives of the whole working class.” That includes the lowest-paid, the unorganized, those without papers, and the unemployed.

“They must convince the world at large that their efforts, far from being narrow and selfish, aim at the emancipation of the downtrodden millions,” Marx wrote.

Locked-out workers snub new ‘offer’

Continued from front page

would like the members to review the proposal and vote on it.” The company, Golan said, “also urges its employees to speak to their union representatives to voice their opinion on this matter. . . . Roquette America is hopeful that the union body will ratify [the offer] and efforts can turn to getting people back to work prior to Christmas.”

“Our negotiating committee has kept us informed” of developments in talks with the company, Cindy Runge told the *Militant* January 4. “That’s why it was proper not to vote on the company’s offer” at a union meeting attended by more than 130 members. Runge said while Roquette gave the impression they were making a better offer, it was worse than the one the unionists rejected in September.

Runge and Tim Monical, on picket duty in “Club 48G,” the picket shack at Roquette’s main gate, said the union’s response to this lockout was far stronger than a similar battle 25 years ago. “In 1985 we didn’t have a picket line,” Monical said. Buddy Howard added, “There is more union solidarity this time.”

Monical said a few local people have crossed the picket line and some strikebreakers have been brought in by LB&F, Inc., an Ohio-based company that recruits and provides scabs to companies across the country. But many workers from the area support Local 48G because they know their bosses want to do the same thing to them.

Picketing continues despite the hardship of winter, and union members are making an effort to

increase participation at the plant entrances. “If you’re sitting at home, you’re getting depressed,” Runge said. “Coming down here boosts you up.” Contributions of firewood let the picketers keep a wood stove stoked up.

Area union members continue to show support to the locked-out workers, visiting the picket line and contributing money. Many talk about similar struggles with their employers. “I didn’t realize how many other people were in the same boat,” Runge said.

Restaurants, gas stations, and other businesses offer discounts to members of Local 48G. Signs reading “We support BCTGM Local 48G” are prominently displayed in a number of storefronts, and on the front door of Lumpy’s Tap, a popular bar on Main Street.

Gate City reported that in late December the Roquette plant had dumped “an estimated 6,000 gallons of corn syrup” into the Mississippi River and is likely to be fined.

Correction

Several lines were dropped from the end of the article “Locked-out building workers get aid from unions, tenants” in the January 10 issue. The final two sentences should read:

“An earlier solidarity rally December 2 also drew tenants and unionists.

“It’s rough out here, but we will win through unity and staying together,” Brian Roseh, a handyman for 20 years, told the *Militant* following the December 22 rally.”

LETTERS

Free speech at Volvo

Three young workers at Volvo, Skövde in Sweden were fired as they called Volvo a “madhouse” and “cuckoo’s nest” on Facebook. The company and the main employers’ organization said in the media that they don’t accept official critiques by “their” workers. Most commentators agreed there is a collision between freedom of speech and capitalist needs. One called the Volvo rules “feudal.”

Discussions on my job didn’t show any big expectations among young workers about the right to free speech. Years of Social Demo-

cratic rule in Sweden have implemented feudal company rules and labor laws lowering workers’ expectations of their rights.

*Lars Erlandsson
Stockholm, Sweden*

U.S. troops abroad

Watching the beginning of the Giants/Packers football game the other night, the announcer boasted that the game was “being broadcast on Armed Forces Network to American troops in 195 countries.” I thought this must be incorrect, so I did some research. It turns out the announcer had,

indeed, read the number wrong. There are American troops currently stationed in only 135 countries—some 70 percent of the countries on the globe.

*Allan Grady
West St. Paul, Minnesota*

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

ROTC on campus

Continued from front page

the military. University administrations at elite schools like Harvard, Columbia, and Yale quickly announced they would welcome ROTC back on campus.

According to the Army ROTC’s website, the program is the largest source of commissioned officers for the U.S. military, producing “approximately 60 percent of the Second Lieutenants who join the Active Army, Army Reserve, and Army National Guard. More than 40 percent of current Active Duty Army General Officers were commissioned through ROTC.”

ROTC has programs at more than 1,100 schools, including junior programs at some high schools. Recruits take military courses and undergo training in addition to regular studies. Those on scholarship or who take advanced courses are required to serve in the military for eight years upon graduation.

At the time of Washington’s war in Vietnam, in which hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of Indochinese were killed, along with nearly 60,000 U.S. soldiers, the ROTC was seen by many students as a symbol of a hated imperialist army that defends the interests of the propertied U.S. rulers against struggles by the oppressed and exploited around the world. Students demanded university administrations cease collaborating with efforts to recruit more soldiers and officers.

With a greater need to assert its military power around the world today because of sharpening competition with rival capitalist powers, Washington has undertaken a transformation of its armed forces, including reconsidering the ban on openly gay troops. The debate among top generals and capitalist politicians has not been about whether to discriminate against homosexuals, but what best serves their goal of increasing U.S. military might.

When Obama campaigned for U.S. president in 2008 he called for repeal of the antigay ban as part of presenting himself as more capable of prosecuting the “war on terror” than John McCain. “Don’t ask, don’t tell” is “a counterproductive strategy,” he told the *Advocate* newspaper at the time. “We’re spending large sums of money to kick highly qualified gays or lesbians out of our military. . . . What I want are members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff who are making decisions based on what strengthens our military and what is going to make us safer, not ideology.”

“Don’t ask, don’t tell” was signed into law by William Clinton in 1993. He had promised during his presidential election bid to issue an executive order lifting what was then a blanket ban on gays in the military. In the end Clinton signed “don’t ask, don’t tell,” under which troops cannot be questioned about their sexual orientation, but soldiers who are known to be homosexuals can be dismissed. Under the policy more than 17,000 men and women have been thrown out of the service, according to the *New York Times*.

One of the most receptive university administrators to the military’s effort to get ROTC back on campus is Harvard president Drew Faust, who proudly points to that school’s long record in providing top officers for the capitalist war machine.

In 2005 the Harvard faculty voted to reinstate ROTC, which had been barred from campus since 1969, if the military ended the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy. Faust joined Michael Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, at a public appearance in November in announcing that ROTC would return to the campus once “don’t ask, don’t tell” was repealed. “I want to be the president of Harvard who sees the end of ‘don’t ask, don’t tell’ because I want to be able to take the steps to ensure that any and every Harvard student is able to make the honorable and admirable choice to commit himself or herself to the nation’s defense,” Faust said.

Columbia University president Lee Bollinger said the end of the antigay policy offers “the opportunity for a new era in the relationship between universities and our military services. . . . This is an historic development for a nation dedicated to fulfilling the core principles of equal rights.”

The New York *Daily News* editorialized that bringing ROTC back onto Ivy League campuses would help break down “the social and economic chasm between the well-to-do and those on the front lines.” Columbia, said the editors, “has a responsibility to expose its students, many of whom are privileged, to the opportunity to serve their country. Investment bank recruiters have the run of the place; the military is owed at least as much respect.”